

LIFE AND TRAINING IN AMERICAN CAMPS

A TRANSPORT SAILS FOR FRANCE.

Today my heart sets sail. This trembling heart
That ne'er before has ventured far beyond
The encircling walls of home and love, fares out
Aghast, upon a waste of treacherous waves,
Beneath whose crested top of glittering white
Lurks death, with cruel eyes and venomed fangs.

O heart of mine, be brave to know and bear
All things which must be borne by his stout heart—
His heart of steel, which once, short years ago,
Beat close beneath thee, feeble, small and weak;
And follow, follow on, by dark and day,
Across the long leagues of that lonely sea,
Until, God willing, loom the shores of France
Before his eager, waiting, boyish eyes.

So young to go—but steadfast, unafraid,
Did I not teach him early to fear naught
In all the world except to do a wrong?
He cannot fear who fights for truth and right.
And I must stay with him in steadfastness,
Girding my spirit to be brave as his.

Down every dark, rough road of march he treads,
My soul shall walk beside. I shall be near,
Feeling the cold, wet dews of dawn that wash
His sleeping, upturned face and soft, brown hair.
I shall hear with him all the noise of war—
The awful roaring of our rescuing guns,
Answering the thunders of the enemy;
See the sad, ravaged lands he goes to save,
Their little children, homeless, poor and weak.